

Message Text

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63

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01 EUR-25

L-03 RSR-01 /109 W

----- 067506

R 151410 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4939

INFO AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY MASERU

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 0944

E . O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINS, WZ

SUBJECT: DPM THREATENS BAN FOREIGN PRESS

REF: MBABANE 0927

1. JOHN SPICER, EDITOR TIMES OF SWAZILAND, HAS BEEN INFORMED BY SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS IN POSITIONS TO KNOW THAT KING OR PRIME MINISTER UNAWARE IN ADVANCE OF DPM' S RADIO ADDRESS. ACCORDING SPICER, KING HIGHLY IRRITATED AND ORDERED THAT THE MOST INFLAMATORY REMARKS BE DELETED FROM PRINTED TEXT. SPICER AWARE OF RAMIFICATIONS, INCLUDING POSSIBILITY OF ACQUIRING PROHIBITED IMMIGRANT STATUS, BUT HE DOES NOT RPT NOT INTEND RETREAT. HE STATED HE PREPARING STIFF EDITORIAL FOR TIMES MAY 18.

2. TIMES OF SWAZILAND IS INDEPENDENT SWAZILAND COMPANY UNDER CHARTER TITLE " AFRICAN ECHO". SWAZILAND PRINTING AND PUBLISHING IS ALSO SEPARATE AND INDEPENDENT COMPANY. CHAIRMAN BOARD " AFRICAN ECHO" IS LEYTON SLATER WHO ALSO CHAIRMAN ARGUS GROUP NEWSPAPERS. ACCORDING SPICER, HE ARRANGED MEETING IN OCTOBER 1972 WITH DPM KHUMALO AND

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SLATER TO DISCUSS SALE OF TIMES TO GOS. IT APPEARED TO SPICER AT TIME THAT MOVEMENTS TOWARD ONE- PARTY STATE WOULD PRECLUDE CONTINUED EXISTENCE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SWAZILAND. NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUED UNTIL MID- DECEMBER, AT WHICH POINT PRIME MINISTER' S SICKNESS, PREOCCUPATIONS WITH INCWALA CEREMONY AND WITH NGWENYA CASE COMBINED TO CAUSE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE BROKEN OFF. IN EARLY FEBRUARY 1973, SPICER TOOK INITIATIVE TO REACTIVATE NEGOTIATIONS AND AT MEETING OF ALL CONCERNED PERMANENT SECRETARIES IT WAS DECIDED GOS NO LONGER INTERESTED IN ACQUIRING ENGLISH- LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER.

3. MINISTER COMMERCE S. S. NXUMALO REVIVED PROJECT IN APRIL FROM POINT OF VIEW OF COMMERCIAL ENTREPRISE, INCLUDING ACQUISITION PRINTING AND PUBLISHING OPERATION. NXUMALO ABSENCE FROM COUNTRY SINCE HAS PREVENTED FURTHER DISCUSSION. MEETING WITH SLATER AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES NOW SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 10 ON RETURN NXUMALO FROM ADDIS ABABA.
SPICER

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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